

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE 65th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON STATE ADMINISTRATION

Call to Order: Chair Dee Brown, on March 13, 2017 at 3:00 PM, in Room 335 Capitol

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Dee Brown, Chair (R)
Sen. Douglas (Doug) Kary, Vice Chair (R)
Sen. Sue Malek (D)
Sen. Ryan Osmundson (R)
Sen. Frank Smith (D)
Sen. Nels Swandal (R)
Sen. Gordon Vance (R)
Sen. Lea Whitford (D)

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Barbara Pietuch, Committee Secretary
Rachel Weiss, Legislative Branch

Audio Committees: These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: HB 287, 3/8/2017; HB 288, 3/8/2017; HB 371, 3/8/2017; HB 388, 3/8/2017; HB 447, 3/8/2017

00:00:02 Chair Brown

HEARING ON HB 447

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

00:01:00 Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R), HD 17, opened the hearing on HB 447, Authorize cancellation of local uncontested general elections by municipalities.

Proponents' Testimony:

00:02:25 Linda Stoll, lobbyist, Montana Association of Clerks and Recorders (MACR)
[EXHIBIT\(sts52a01\)](#)

00:04:06 Bret Rutherford, election official, Yellowstone County
00:04:42 Shantil Siaperas, legislative analyst and communications specialist, Montana Association of Counties
[EXHIBIT\(sts52a02\)](#)

00:05:54 Regina Plettenberg, election administrator, Ravalli County; president, Montana Association of Clerks and Recorders (MACR)
[EXHIBIT\(sts52a03\)](#)

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

00:07:07 Sen. Swandal
00:07:12 Rep. Fitzgerald
00:07:37 Chair Brown
00:08:14 Ms. Stoll, MACR
00:09:23 Ms. Plettenberg, MACR
00:10:16 Chair Brown
00:10:24 Ms. Plettenberg
00:10:36 Sen. Whitford
00:10:55 Ms. Stoll

Closing by Sponsor:

00:11:25 Rep. Fitzgerald
00:11:57 Chair Brown

HEARING ON HB 388

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

00:12:15 Rep. Greg Hertz (R), HD 12, opened the hearing on HB 388, Revising voter qualification and designation in irrigation district elections.

Proponents' Testimony:

00:14:21 Regina Plettenberg, election administrator, Ravalli County; president, Montana Association of Clerks and Recorders

00:15:28 Mike Murphy, executive director, Montana Water Resources Association (MWRA)

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

00:16:40 Chair Brown
00:17:10 Rachel Weiss, research analyst, Legislative Services Division
00:17:28 Chair Brown
00:17:47 Rep. Hertz
00:17:57 Sen. Whitford
00:18:18 Rep. Hertz
00:18:39 Sen. Whitford
00:19:13 Mr. Murphy, MWRA
00:19:22 Sen. Whitford
00:20:05 Mr. Murphy
00:20:49 Chair Brown
00:21:19 Mr. Murphy
00:21:32 Chair Brown
00:21:45 Mr. Murphy
00:22:07 Chair Brown
00:22:13 Mr. Murphy
00:22:37 Chair Brown
00:22:40 Mr. Murphy
00:22:48 Chair Brown
00:23:00 Mr. Murphy
00:23:08 Chair Brown

Closing by Sponsor:

00:23:20 Rep. Hertz

00:23:49 Chair Brown

HEARING ON HB 287

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

00:24:12 Rep. Bryce Bennett (D), HD 91, opened the hearing on HB 287, Revise absentee ballot list confirmation laws.

Proponents' Testimony:

00:28:07 Bret Rutherford, election administrator, Yellowstone County (YC)
00:30:58 Katy Westhoff, campus organizer, Montana Public Interest Research Group
00:32:01 Regina Plettenberg, election administrator, Ravalli County; president, Montana Association of Clerks and Recorders (MACR)

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony:

00:34:20 Derek Oestreicher, elections director, Secretary of State's Office

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

00:34:51 Chair Brown
00:35:25 Mr. Rutherford, YC
00:35:52 Chair Brown
00:36:15 Mr. Rutherford
00:36:26 Chair Brown
00:36:36 Mr. Rutherford
00:36:50 Sen. Osmundson
00:37:33 Rep. Bennett
00:38:16 Mr. Rutherford
00:38:58 Sen. Whitford
00:39:18 Mr. Rutherford
00:40:07 Chair Brown

EXHIBIT(sts52a04)

00:40:32 Sen. Osmundson
00:41:01 Mr. Rutherford
00:41:48 Chair Brown
00:42:02 Mr. Rutherford
00:42:30 Chair Brown
00:42:42 Mr. Rutherford
00:43:07 Ms. Plettenberg, MACR
00:43:28 Chair Brown
00:43:48 Ms. Plettenberg
00:43:57 Chair Brown

Closing by Sponsor:

00:44:04 Rep. Bennett

00:45:43 Chair Brown
00:45:53 Rep. Bennett

00:46:13 Sen. Malek entered the meeting.

HEARING ON HB 288

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

00:46:30 Rep. Bryce Bennett (D), HD 91, opened the hearing on HB 288, Require fee for presidential preference primary candidates.

[EXHIBIT\(sts52a05\)](#)

Proponents' Testimony:

00:49:32 Derek Oestreicher, elections director, Secretary of State's Office

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

00:50:13 Chair Brown
00:50:23 Rep. Bennett

Closing by Sponsor:

00:50:47 Rep. Bennett

HEARING ON HB 371

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

00:51:39 Rep. Bryce Bennett (D), HD 91, opened the hearing on HB 371, Allow late registrant absentee ballots to be dropped off at polling locations.

Proponents' Testimony:

00:54:42 Bret Rutherford, election director, Yellowstone County (YC)
00:55:30 Katy Westhoff, campus organizer, Montana Public Interest Research Group

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony:

00:56:22 Derek Oestreicher, elections director, Secretary of State's Office (SOS)

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

00:56:52 Chair Brown
00:57:40 Mr. Oestreicher, SOS
00:57:47 Chair Brown
00:57:56 Mr. Oestreicher
00:58:23 Chair Brown
00:58:51 Mr. Oestreicher
00:59:07 Mr. Rutherford, YC
00:59:54 Chair Brown
01:00:01 Mr. Rutherford
01:00:21 Chair Brown
01:00:25 Sen. Kary
01:00:46 Mr. Rutherford
01:01:10 Chair Brown

Closing by Sponsor:

01:01:16 Rep. Bennett

Committee Business:

01:03:09 Chair Brown

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 4:05 PM

Barbara Pietuch, Secretary

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Additional Documents:

EXHIBIT([sts52aad.pdf](#))